

Press release

Yaskawa Europe and Alma enter into a partnership agreement for off-line programming of welding robots

Yaskawa Europe, a world leader in industrial robotics, and Alma, a specialist in off-line programming (OLP) for welding robots, announce the signature of a partnership agreement. Within the framework of this agreement, which is in line with the historical collaboration between the two actors, Alma's Almacam Weld software becomes a reference OLP solution in Yaskawa Europe's catalog and will be promoted by the manufacturer to its customers with Alma's support.

Off-line programming, a key lever for the productivity of robotic welding installations

Off-line programming, which allows a robot to be graphically programmed from a virtual scene and its movements to be simulated, is more than an alternative to traditional programming by learning. It is an approach that is becoming more and more common among manufacturers, and is all the more interesting when the products manufactured are varied, modular or subject to frequent adaptations, and when the series to produce are small.

In Europe, dozens of companies of all sizes use Almacam Weld OLP solution to program their Motoman welding robots from Yaskawa. The agreement formalized between the two actors concretizes a long-standing cooperation in the field, with Alma and Yaskawa Europe teams or their local resellers (Spain, Portugal, Netherlands...) already working together to provide their customers with a high-performance robotic solution. The capabilities of the Almacam Weld software, in particular in terms of automation drastically reducing part programming times, were particularly appreciated.

A flexible framework for a true strategic partnership

This partnership completes Yaskawa Europe's offer for robotic welding with an expert and market-recognized software solution, 100% proprietary, developed by a pioneer of the OLP which is also an independent group. « Thanks to Alma we will be able to increase the added value of our solutions and provide a turnkey solution to our customers, announces Richard Tontsch, Manager Marketing of Yaskawa Europe. On the other hand, the partnership has been elaborated to offer a maximum of flexibility, from the pre-sales of the solution to the technical support, in order to allow our teams or our local resellers to adapt to all situations. » For this purpose, Yaskawa Europe will be able to rely on Alma's presence in different European countries and on its local teams of experts for the localization of the service to the end customers.

Yaskawa Europe and its resellers will benefit from a tailor-made support allowing its technical and commercial teams to be trained on Alma's software and to be accompanied in the deployment of OLP projects. The long-term objective for the manufacturer is to gain autonomy so as to be able to directly ensure the implementation and support of the software for its customers.

« We are very pleased with this agreement with a major player in robotics, which formalizes the strong ties we have established with Yaskawa in Europe, explains Christelle Savorgnani, sales and marketing manager of Alma's CAD/CAM software division. It is the concretization of our expertise of more than

25 years in off-line programming software and of our capacity to innovate continuously to improve the productivity of robotized welding installations, to bring flexibility to production and to reduce the operating costs of our customers. It is also the result of a shared vision of the industry, of collaboration as a key success factor for all stakeholders, and of human values, which are essential for a long-term partnership. »

Based on the perfect technical and commercial complementarity between the two players, this agreement lays the foundations for a true strategic partnership.

About Yaskawa Europe

With annual sales of 390 billion yen (approximately 3.3 billion euro, fiscal year ended February 28, 2021), Yaskawa is a global technology supplier in the area of robotics, drive and control technology, as well as of solutions in the energy sector. Founded in Japan in 1915, Yaskawa has practiced the same philosophy for over 100 years, namely to deliver products of the highest quality, and in doing so has established itself at the top of the global market. Throughout this time, Yaskawa has evolved from a motor producer to an automation provider and finally, by way of the Industry 4.0 concept i3 mechatronics, to a solution provider.

Yaskawa's business activities comprise the areas of drives (GA700 inverter drives), motion control (Sigma-7 servo drives, servo motors, machine controllers), robotics (Motoman industrial robots, robot systems), system engineering (generators and converters) as well as information technology (software-based products). Since 2012, Yaskawa's portfolio has also included control technology, visualization systems and chip solutions from the former VIPA GmbH in Herzogenaurach. The merger was legally finalized in October 2019, when the Profichip brand became a separate product division at Yaskawa known as "Profichip Embedded Solutions." In October 2014, Yaskawa also acquired The Switch Engineering Ltd., operating in the sectors of wind, marine, and turbo/industrial applications.

Yaskawa is thus one of the few companies in the world able to offer components and solutions for virtually all sectors from a single source.

Thanks to substantial investments into research and development, the company has produced a large number of inventions, patents and innovations. This technological expertise has allowed the company divisions to achieve a leading market position in a wide range of industries, including: mechanical and plant engineering (packaging machines, pumps/compressors, textile machines, digital printing machines, manufacture of cranes and lifting equipment, systems for semiconductor and electronics manufacturing, machines for the harvesting/extraction and processing of wood, glass, metal, stone/soil) as well as the elevator industry, automotive construction and the field of assembly and handling applications. The industrial robots of the Motoman brand are used, for example, for robot welding, laboratory automation, for packaging and handling applications as well as in the field of automated painting.

Based in Eschborn near Frankfurt in Germany, Yaskawa Europe GmbH comprises the Drives Motion Controls (automation, drive and control technology), Robotics (industrial robots, systems) and Environmental Energy (environmental engineering) business units, and services the markets of Europe, Africa, the Middle East and the states of the former Soviet Union.

About Alma

Founded by researchers at the University of Grenoble in 1979, Alma is a CAD/CAM software publisher for cutting, sheet metal and robotics with internationally recognized technical expertise. Alma was also a pioneer in robotics 25 years ago with its trajectory calculation algorithms with obstacle avoidance and its off-line robot programming software. All over the world, Alma's software solutions and web applications optimize the potential of machines and robots. On the strength of its cooperative and human values, Alma pursues an industrial strategy based on the development of an extended offer for Industry 4.0, the perpetuation of the company project and the involvement of its employees. Alma is also involved in other publishing and digital services activities in France.

www.almacam.com

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From left to right: Pascal Jeangirard (CEO of Yaskawa France), Laurence Ruffin (President and CEO of Alma) and Bruno Schnekenburger (President and CEO of Yaskawa Europe).

The original photo can be downloaded here:

<https://almacam.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/signature-YaskawaEurope-Alma-agreement.jpg>